

Panel: Promoting Fair and Impartial Policing: A Comprehensive Program for Addressing Bias in Policing

Speaker: Lorie Fridell, Associate Professor of Criminology, University of South Florida

Presentation Outline / Narrative Summary:

I will speak for up to one hour and leave the remaining time for discussion and Q & A. While my key themes will be reminiscent of my presentation to NACOLE members in 2006, I have significant, new material that will make this “fresh” even for individuals who were present at the Boise session.

I will start by talking about how we need to “rethink” or “reconceptualize” racially biased policing. I will argue against the claim that racially biased policing is caused by “widespread racism in policing.” I will acknowledge that there are racist police officers, but argue that even well-meaning officers can manifest biased behaviors. I will share some of the research that supports this latter claim—including hot-off-the-press research using police officers as subjects. I will discuss the implication of this broader reconceptualization for cooperative reform efforts.

The review of the science will provide a basis for my coverage of how agencies can and should proactively promote fair and impartial policing. I will discuss principles and best practices in the realms of (1) recruitment/hiring, (2) training, (3) policy, (4) supervision/accountability, (5) assessing institutional practices/priorities, (6) outreach to diverse communities, and (7) measurement (including data collection). Due to the nature of the audience, I will highlight (under supervision/accountability) the challenges of investigating racial profiling complaints and the implications of those challenges for agency and civilian review practice. I will, throughout my presentation, share information on my ongoing work with the San Francisco Police Department to implement a comprehensive program to produce fair and impartial policing.